



## Mended Hearts

### National Office

The Mended Hearts, Inc.  
8150 N. Central Expressway, M2248  
Dallas, TX 75206  
(888) HEART99 (888-432-7899)  
[www.mendedhearts.org](http://www.mendedhearts.org)

Inspiring hope and improving the quality of life  
for heart patients and their families  
through ongoing peer-to-peer support.

November 16, 2016

Senator Lamar Alexander, Chairman  
Senate Health, Education Labor and  
Pensions Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Patty Murray, Ranking Member  
Senate Health, Education Labor and  
Pensions Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Fred Upton, Chairman  
House Energy and Commerce Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette  
House Energy and Commerce Committee  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Alexander and Upton and Ranking Member Murray and Representative DeGette:

On behalf of the Mended Hearts, we would like to offer our strong endorsement and support of the 21st Century Cures Act (H.R. 6) and its companion measures in the Senate. We commend your Committees' work to personalize health care, support research and streamline our nation's innovation ecosystem to deliver better, faster cures to more patients. Thank you for your collective leadership on this measure.

As the nation's oldest and largest peer-to-peer support group for cardiovascular patients with more than 300 chapters and 20,000 members, Mended Hearts is dedicated to inspiring hope and improving the quality of life for heart patients and their families through ongoing peer-to-peer support. Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is among the most widespread and costly health problems facing the nation today. It is the leading cause of death in the United States and is responsible for an estimated 17 percent of the national health expenditures. More than 800,000 Americans will die from cardiovascular disease each year – that's one in every three deaths. The public health burden associated with CVD is estimated to reach beyond \$320 billion annually. As the population ages, these costs are expected to increase substantially. The total direct costs associated with CVD are expected to nearly triple by 2030 to \$818 billion.

Effective prevention strategies and new treatments born out of promising, novel research and innovation are needed to limit the growing burden of CVD. The 21st Century Cures Act and the Senate's medical innovation bills are important steps towards fostering the delivery of innovative, safe, and effective treatments and cures for CVD patients. An infusion of federal investment in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is needed to rebuild our nation's biomedical research capacity, which has seen its ability to fund promising research falter due to inflation over the past decade. We urge this legislative initiative's timely passage before the adjournment of the 114th Congress, so that we may improve the pace of progress.



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The U.S. has long been at the forefront of biomedical discovery. Over the last century, remarkable biomedical discoveries have produced breakthroughs that have eased suffering and lead to improved treatments for some of today's most debilitating conditions. Thank you again for your efforts to ensure that our nation's commitment to biomedical medical research and innovation does not falter.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to advance this legislation through Congress.

Sincerely,

Andrea Baer, MS  
Director of Patient Advocacy  
Mended Hearts, Inc.